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TRIP REPORT
OF
REGIONAL PUBLICATIONS OFFICER CAIRO
TO
KHARTOUM - SUDAN
24-27 April 1961

A. Official Contacts

1. Muhammad 'Amir Bashir, Director of Information, Ministry of Information;
2. Ambassador James S. Moose, Jr.;
3. Stephen P. Dorsey, DCM;
4. Harry S. Hudson, PAO, USIA;
5. Cleo A. Noel, 2nd Secretary;
6. John C. Murray, Attache;
7. Laverne J. Kunke, Cultural Affairs Officer, USIA

B. Bookstores Visited

1. The Sudan Bookshop: large; well-stocked; English and Arabic; no Communist material;
2. Omdurman Bookshop: medium; all-Arabic; little Communist material;
3. Ath-Thaqafah Bookshop: small; literary Arabic works;
4. Dar al-Muwatin Bookshop: only Soviet, Soviet Bloc and Chinese books and periodicals;
5. Al-Bashir Bookshop: small; Arabic religious and spiritualistic publications.

C. Comments

The Government of the Sudan is the sole publisher there except for a few other small establishments which operate privately. There is very little activity in this field at the present time. Even the government is producing less than before the present regime took over. The RPO was able to purchase a few useful publications, among which is the SUDAN TRADE DIRECTORY, issued by the government for 1960-61. On the other hand, Communist publications and periodicals flood the bookstores and newsstands in Khartoum and Omdurman. One good-sized bookstore, Dar al-Muwatin, centrally located in Khartoum, is overflowing with Soviet, Soviet Bloc, and Chinese books and periodicals in both Arabic and English. The newsstands

feature a large

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feature a large quantity of cheap Communist books and periodicals. Samplings of these publications were purchased by the RPO and forwarded for specific requirements. No local Communist Party books, pamphlets, serials, etc. could be found openly. However, Embassy Khartoum has been reporting regularly on all such material acquired covertly.

Mr. Harry Hudson, PAO, and Mr. Emmett Coxson, recently named part-time PO, accompanied the RPO to the Ministry of Information, where the RPO met with its director, Muhammad 'Amir Bashir. After having stated the purpose of his visit, he was handed a few samples of publications which the Ministry publishes. Later in the discussion, the matter of the abundance of Communist material in Khartoum was mentioned to Muhammad Bashir. He replied that the United States can bring in its own publications also, and since the Sudan is neutral, the government has no objection if more U. S. publications appear in newsstands and bookstores. He also stated that the magazine AL-HAYAT FI AMRIKA (Life in the United States) is over-priced and should not sell for more than three piasters.

The RPO stated in his report that in order to counter the shocking abundance of Communist material in the Sudan, the U. S. must in some way find it possible to offer more publications for a negligible price. The situation in the Sudan, as far as Communist publications are concerned, reminds him of the deluge of Communist material in Baghdad after Qasim had taken over. The PAO and the DCM, with whom he talked after having gone to the bookstores and purchased the sampling of Communist publications, both agreed wholeheartedly that something should be done to counter this Commie flood. The RPO believes that Mr. Hudson, who is anxious to do all he can, should be given added support by his agency. He should be permitted to bring the price of AL-HAYAT FI AMRIKA, for instance, to three piasters or less, and to make available more U. S. publications on the market.

Enclosed is an up-to-date list of Sudanese serials.

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